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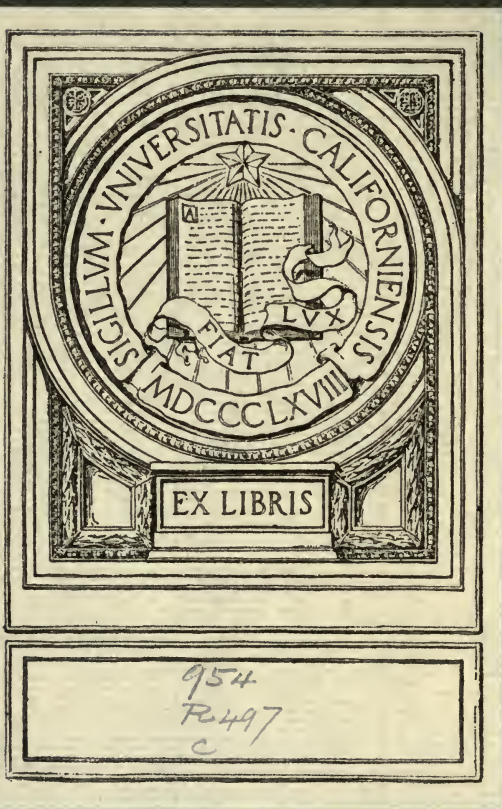


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THE CHAPLET OF PAN



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STAGE GUILD MASQUES

· THE CHAPLET OF PAN ·

THE CHAPLET OF PAN

A MASQUE

BY WALLACE RICE AND
THOMAS WOOD STEVENS



THE
STAGE GUILD
CHICAGO

THE STAGE GUILD
CHICAGO

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THE STAGE GUILD
1527 RAILWAY EXCHANGE BUILDING
CHICAGO, ILL.

THE CHAPLET OF PAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

[Original production]

IMMORTALS.

Pan, the Great God	- - - - -	Donald Robertson
The Dryad of the May Day	- - - - -	Virginia Brooks
The Dryad of the May Night	- - - - -	Vida Sutton
A Singing Nymph	- - - - -	Grace Kennicott
Chorus of Nymphs and Fauns.		

MORTALS.

Ugolino, Prince of Capodimonte	- - - - -	Hermann Lieb
Riccardo, Poet to the Prince	- - - - -	Francis Lieb
Pietro Paolo, Steward to Ugolino	- - - - -	William Owen
Baldassare, the Prince's Headsman	- - - - -	Frank Hardin
Ruffo, a Goatherd	- - - - -	J. Ralph Bradley
Fiametta, a Young Lady of Quality	- - - - -	Alice John
Sidonia, beloved of Pietro Paolo	- - - - -	Marion Redlich
Beffana, a Goatherdess	- - - - -	Grace Wilson

SCENE.

A wood in the gardens of Ugolino. Marble seats right and left. In the distance the portico of the palace. Statuary disposed among the shrubbery. At the right, a terminal figure of a faun.

TIME.

A May Day in the Fifteenth Century.

NOTE.—The Chaplet of Pan was first produced by Donald Robertson at Ravinia, and was played by him at the Art Institute, Chicago, season of 1909; special performances were given for the Polytechnic Society, the Art Student's League of Chicago, etc. It was also played at Mandel Hall, University of Chicago, in 1909.

DEDICATION.

This is for Kenneth and Marjorie
This slender book
Of May
While it is still their Maytime,
Of tenuous plot and mirthful play
Before a little lost becomes their playtime,
Ere ever a year may look
Askance at them, or see
Aught but the merry plan
Of living, loving on the fond May Day ;
And if, long hence, when they shall scan
These brief, slight pages,
Some seeming happy line engages
Strong eyes
Or sweet,
May they think on the great god Pan,
Whose children all are we,
And may their spirits greet
The makers of this masque,
Who only ask
Of any skies
The granting of their prayer
Through every jocund month to be:
That Kenneth and fair Marjorie
May always move in sunlit air
Down leafy aisles,
O'er gleamy lawns,
Through hours that sing
And many a year that smiles,
Remembered by, remembering
The garden gods and nymphs and fauns
Of everlasting Spring!

THE CHAPLET OF PAN.

*The first glimmerings of morning twilight; a chorus
of unseen fauns and nymphs, chanting:*

Pan, earth's lord, is a very god,—
Father and brother, too,—
Lord of the spirit, lord of the clod,
God of the stars and dew.

Blossoms there are, and piping birds,
Herbs and trees and man,
Brooks and hillocks, flocks and herds,—
And all are gods with Pan.

We in Pan, and he in us,
All in the May Day weather;
He and the Springtime glorious
And we — great gods together.

*[The dawn brightens, discovering Pan awaking from
sleep, his back against a tree; he rouses himself and
rubs his eyes.]*

PAN

Now do the spiteful constellations swarm
Along the western rim of night. Ah, me!
I'm wearied with much running after joy,
Tired with deep laughter and swift-hearted love,
All warm and cold with April in my veins,
All full and hungry, both at once, with May.
Here is no time for wintry sleep. They'll say
That Pan grows old. . . .

How many times, O Night, have we fared forth
To watch along the hills the trees in fear
Tremble and thrill when from the fervent South

The still, green serpent, like a league-long stream,
Comes up and clips the world, and clings to it,
And squeezes out the milky juice of Spring;
How many times, my May Night! . . .

Only to me this one of all my nights,
One for full wakening, running, keen encounter,
And flying pulses from the spring of Time.
And Italy grows old: the moon that in my youth
Turned all the hills to gold, sheds silver now;
For Artemis is dead, and some poor sprite,
Cold from the North, comes down to take her place.
The rose trees that a thousand years ago
Fed on the dust of girls I once had loved,
Are gone, with all their kisses, on the wind.

To-night a nymph ran by me, silently,
Not laughing with the wonder in her eyes,
And so my eager hand slipped through her hair
And she escaped me. But a single tress was reft
And tangled in my fingers. . . . I let her go:
The tress was grey.

[*He takes the chaplet from his head.*]

She did not wait, not she;
But, had she waited, I'd have given her this,
And let her feel the hot, sweet leap of blood
That riots through my chaplet in the Spring.
This would have made her young and gay, . . .
This would have granted her one day of mirth.

[*Enter the Dryad of the May Night.*]

Ho, ho! Here's one that knows me.

[*He makes for her, but she eludes him.*]

DRYAD OF THE MAY NIGHT.

Not so fast, god of the one blue night!

PAN.

O thou that livest in the poplar's heart,
Is it not good to be, to laugh and love,
Roll in the dew, and give the night to joy?

DRYAD OF THE MAY NIGHT.

Yea ; but I 've slept a year within my tree.
I 'm cramped.

PAN.

This is a time for mirth.
Come, run with me, down to the beaten marge
Where the sea whispers, and we 'll play awhile
With Aphrodite's mother.

DRYAD OF THE MAY NIGHT.

Nay ; not yet ;
My knees are woody still, my feet unspringing ;
It needs a moment for the sap to start.
[*Sees the Faun's head.*]
Who 's this ?

PAN.

[*Putting his arm around the Faun's neck.*]
A Faun I knew — an ancient friend —
They 've just dug him from under centuries.
[*He crowns the figure of the Faun with his chaplet.*]
Wear now my chaplet. If its magic hold,
Your stony lips should lighten with rich laughter,
Your cheeks should glow and puff with liquid mirth,
And you should shake away this marble shell,
And dance to inward music. No ? He 's gone.
The chaplet wakes him not — no life in him.
[*To the Dryad.*]
He was the merriest fellow in his day,—
A stealer of wine, one who could laugh the hours
From twilight until dawn.

DRYAD OF THE MAY NIGHT.

Yea ; I remember him. He bore me off
One night in summer to a distant shore
Where, still afloat among the blossoming waves,
The dawn flew down and found us. Not a tree
On all the shore to hide me, but a cave
Deep in the rocks ; and half the livelong day
As we lay hidden, scornful Artemis

Drew up her waters and imprisoned us.
He was full of song. But now — he's grave enough.

PAN.

And you, and I, and all the world grow grave.
Bah! I am tired of time and silences.
Shall we be conquered by the nibbling years,
Shall we sit quiet like a shepherd's crone,
And turn to marble while the earth grows old?
Tree-Heart, burn with the Spring, leap with the
wave,

[He catches at her again, but she escapes.]

Down with me to the temples that stand on the
beaches,

Down and dance, in the whirl of the moon's white fire.
Sing, love — way, come away!

[A ray of light strikes on his face.]

The sun doth smite me, and the night is gone.

[Enter Dryad of the May Day.]

Lead on, old Time, I'll follow for the nonce.

[Gives a hand to the Dryad of the May Day.]

But not until we've greeted the glad day.

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

'T is ours, O Pan, to rouse a drowsy world.

PAN.

Aye, Dryad of the twelvemonth's splendid hours;
Ho, brothers and sisters, come dance the May!

[Enter Chorus of Nymphs and Fauns.]

Not yet dead is the ancient world:
Deep in the heart of man are furled
Old belief and pulsing creed
Proved by many a jovial deed.

CHORUS.

Dance we then in the merry May,
Live and love as in earlier dawns,
Greet with gladness the lyric day,
Pan and his jocund nymphs and fauns.

PAN.

Not for us is the pallid face,
Lowly demeanour and all ungrace;
Not while breathes a maid and man
Fails the worship of great god Pan.

CHORUS.

Dance we then in the merry May,
Live and love as in earlier dawns,
Greet with gladness the lyric day,
Pan and his jocund nymphs and fauns.

[Exeunt omnes, led by Pan and the two Dryads; Pan's chaplet is left on the head of the Faun. The light strengthens to mid-morning. Enter Ugolino, greatly bored, followed by Riccardo, who is reading him an original poem on Spring.]

RICCARDO.

[Reading.]

This is the merry month men call the May,
When even night is bright, and gay the day;
When flowers and serpents, yea, the pretty dove
Affection whisper, and would prove their love.
This is—

UGOLINO.

On what proud day, aglow with Phœbus' fire—
Did you concoct that pitiful device?

RICCARDO.

One only sings as the spirit drives. Your Grace,
I do regret the verses please you not.

UGOLINO.

Have done with cringing compliment. How long
Have I now had you by me? Long enough to learn
If but the Muses left one spark of wit—
I only have you for the fashion's sake,
I only praise you for that you are mine—
When it doth suit my public humour. For myself,
I'd rather hear a bagpipe squeal. Riccardo,

Take yourself away ; go find some girl
Can make you dance. Have done with singing.

RICCARDO.

Your Grace, I only go, or sing, or dance,
Or live, I may say, as your Highness wills.

UGOLINO.

Get you gone. Get you—

[*Exit Riccardo, hastily.*]

He only lives as I will! Mother of Heaven,
Let him die, then. I'll not be blamed for him.
May Day revels, forsooth! I've that within—
A weary, windy space where my heart was,
A nipping, bleak November of the soul—
Will make an end to all this May-tide folly.
Riccardo, Fiametta, Pietro Paolo,—
Ye gods, how they do bait and sicken me!
I'm neither old nor young enough, they know,
To make a sport of common tyranny.
I am not wont to slay without excuse;
Here's self-defense. They're boring me to death.
Poets and thieves I have, and girls that smile;
But in myself no tickling worth good laughter,
No temper hot enough for fight, no urge,
No flickering tang in honest princely sin.
Whose fault's all this? I'll make an end of them.

RUFFO.

[*Heard from without.*]

Come on, Beffana, come; come on along!

UGOLINO.

More apes! Lord, can I never be alone?

[*He goes off among the trees.*]

[*Enter Ruffo and Beffana, he leading her by the hand.*]

RUFFO.

Look you, Beffana, here's the stone fellow I told you
of. Which is, I take it, a man that hath slept in a
clay-bed, and so turned to a post-top. Right where
he was, he be, and has never stirred sin' yestere'en.

BEFFANA.

[*Moving around the figure.*]

I see nothing good to him. He's lacking an ear, too, and the other ear is stuffed with mud yet.

RUFFO.

That's as well, too. He need not listen to your chattering.

BEFFANA.

My chattering, forsooth! What think you of his looks?

RUFFO.

Why this, Beffana: he shows what manner of men there were in Italy when he went asleep — and an ugly sort, and a bad sort, and a wicked. Plainly the goat is running out of the blood. Men be better looking of these days. What a horrid nose!

[*He stands beside the Faun.*]

Say, now, Beffana, be not the men better favoured nor they were? Look o' me and the stone fellow. Say now?

BEFFANA.

I see little, very little, and the truth be told — which I will tell truth as ever — very little, as it were — to choose between the two of you.

RUFFO.

Be off, you vixen.

BEFFANA.

An I were choosing a man to watch goats, I'd take you, Ruffo, I would. He'd be ay too friendly with the flock. But for a husband —

RUFFO.

What be you doing a-choosing husbands — at your age, and your man not yet nine years dead. Besides, he hath a string o' spinach atop of his head, which is, I take it, an uneven way to look at us. Now I take off the spinach, and put it on myself, and —

[*The music sounds the chaplet motive, and as he puts the wreath on his head, the Dryad of the May Day enters, dancing. Ruffo rubs his eyes, laughs foolishly, and starts toward the Dryad. Beffana sees nothing of this, being engaged with her own scornful laughter. Ruffo begins to dance clumsily, and is led around the stage by the Dryad, till he dances before Beffana. Exit the Dryad.*]

BEFFANA.

You look like the roast pig to a harvest feast.

RUFFO.

[*Still dancing.*]

I'm not so old my blood is cold,
Nor yet are you, my lassie-bird;
Why should we hold an empty fold
When love is free, as I have heard.
And as for you — if I'll be true
Until the sun o' morrow,
Is youth so mad or Spring so sad
That you should think o' sorrow?

BEFFANA.

Come here, fool. What zany work is this? Maybe
't is a fairy wreath, that can make you rich. Give
it me.

[*He dances around her; she catches at the chaplet.*]
Give it me, I say. I've a mind to try it on.

[*She gets it; the chaplet music sounds as she puts it on, and she stands chuckling. The Dryad comes in and dances before her until she herself begins to dance. The Dryad disappears.*]

RUFFO.

'Troth, Beffana, I never knew you were so fair.

BEFFANA.

'Sooth, Ruffo, I had forgot how young we were.

RUFFO.

Beffana!

BEFFANA.

Ruffo!

[They sit together on the bench, embracing each other and still swaying to the rhythm of the dance. Ugolino enters at the back.]

UGOLINO.

It cannot be such things as these have use,
Save that they mar a quiet world, stir up a pool
That else would give the sky to downcast eyes.
It were a worthy work so to contrive
That they might serve a gentle purpose.

RUFFO.

Go wi' me to the shore.

BEFFANA.

Nay, come wi' me to town.

RUFFO.

I'll never leave you more.

BEFFANA.

I'll go wi' you to the shore.

RUFFO.

And we'll go together to town.

UGOLINO.

[Coming down.]

Come hither, fellow. Know you Messer Paolo?

[Ruffo nods, still almost dancing.]

Take you him this key, and tell him this:
Madonna Sidonia bids him come at once,
Here to the Faun's head.

[Ruffo goes out, whistling and loitering.]

You, dame, take off that chaplet. Your age!

[She takes off the chaplet and leaves it on the bench.]

Bear you this message to Madonna Fiametta.
Say to her: A poet by the Faun's head waits
And hopes to see the sun of heaven burn
In golden glory through the tree-ways hither.

BEFFANA.

What means all that, my lord?

UGOLINO.

Mischief, dame. Be you swift at it!

BEFFANA.

[Following Ugolino off, centre.]

Ruffo, Ruffo, wait for me!

[Ugolino claps his hands. Enter Baldassare.]

UGOLINO.

See you yon goatherds? I have given them
An errand each. I would not see them more.
I never saw them till to-day, and yet
They weary me.

BALDASSARE.

All shall be done neatly, my lord, as you command.

[Exit Baldassare, centre.]

UGOLINO.

If I but cross them, they will soon cross me.
I'd not be bloody. I only ask for peace.
Yet if they will not give me peace, and live
Out of my sight, why then I've leave to set
A trick or two afoot. And when they cross me—
*[Exit Ugolino, left. As he goes out, Pan and the
Dryad of the May Day creep out of the foliage on
the right. Pan takes up the chaplet caressingly.]*

PAN.

The live things still do dance my tune. My day
Stirs in these human clods the urge of spring
And sets asprout the seeds of love and mirth.

[He crowns the Faun again.]

Old friend, it grieves me that you do not wake,
And that for you my day comes up in vain.

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

Some curious tyranny here they practice, Pan.
Yon prince doth deal in plots and devilries,

And makes of love, on this your day of days,
A treason and a coil of death.

PAN.

Let him.

We have no fear of him, no care of coils
That weave among the faithless hearts of men
Or fluttering souls of life. For us the years
Slide on and pass in quick succession by:
The blossom of our immortality
Fades not, nor dies.

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

[*Pointing to the Faun.*]

Yet *he* has tasted death.

PAN.

Not so; and yet, he lives not. He was one
Of my leal subjects while my shrines were green.
I mourn him now: within his body breathed
A fervent fire that never was a soul;
He was an earthling, filled with earth's delight,
But never tinctured with eternity,
And when that footless flame burned down
He sank to earth, and naught of him was left
To wander with the troop of banished gods
In glorious exile out beyond the stars;
And naught of him was like the soul of man
That lives beyond translation and decay.
Thus much we know of time: there was a tide
That filled our altars high with sacrifice,
And poured out riches of the sun-loved earth,
And made us mad with power and ecstasy.
Then, lo! the tide ebbed back into the sea,
And fallen temples white beneath the moon
Housed ruined altars lacking wine and flame.
Faith die — so much we know of death.

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

And is there in you no quick pitying thing
That leaps when loves are cut away and bleed?

PAN.

Aye, loves. What shall loves do with death?

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

These mortals seem to mix them fatefully.

PAN.

Ah, but, my Tree-Heart, this shall we re-mould;
The man who plots of bloody deeds to-day
Affronts me in my very temple door.
Behold the love that the enfolding sun
Doth press upon the lips of Italy;
Look how the trees do yearn to touch the sky;
Look how the gentle birds do sing and mate;
Look how yon clods are maddened with divine
And fleeting humours. Hear our nymphs go by —
[*Enter the Singing Nymph. Pan, listening to her song, follows.*]

THE SINGING NYMPH.

By the rain that fills the day,
Dripping, sombre skies of grey,
The Faun I love has gone away!

By the greening grass and tree,
Birds with mating melody,
The Faun I love comes back to me!

By the suns that softly shine,
All things tender, all things fine,
The Faun is here—my love is mine!

[*Exit the Singing Nymph. Pan shakes off the reverie of the song, crying triumphantly.*]

PAN.

And Pan is here — and love is thine.

[*He runs back to the Dryad.*]

This coil

Is ours to scatter. See, now cometh one
Who brings the tyrant's token. Watch, Tree-Heart.

[*Pan and the Dryad go off, stealthily, and Pietro Paolo enters hurriedly, looking about him.*]

PIETRO PAOLO.

[*Calling softly.*]

Sidonia, Lady Sidonia.

[*He listens a moment, and then takes out the key.*]

Madonna Sidonia sendeth me a key.

What means that, I wonder? A key, sometimes,
Symbols possession—she means to give her heart,
Scarred with past battles and my year-long siege,
Into my keeping. Pleasant May Day fancy!

[*He takes up the chaplet.*]

She comes. I'll not seem to mark her.

[*Enter Fiametta, also hurriedly. As he turns toward her, Pietro Paolo flings down the chaplet at her feet, saying,*]

Garlands for your path, madonna.

[*The key falls with the chaplet. Pietro Paolo, who has bowed low in flinging the chaplet, now sees that he has flung it to the wrong lady, and exclaims impatiently,*]

Fiametta!

FIAMETTA.

Take it for your own, Pietro. Only

See to it that your path lead hence.

[*Pietro picks up the chaplet. She seats herself, and looks back at him.*]

Not gone yet?

PIETRO PAOLO.

Not yet. I'm minded to stay here, forsooth.

There's many a pleasanter spot, I'll warrant you;

But I'll none of them. Here'll do for me.

[*He seats himself.*]

FIAMETTA.

It's a sad world. . . .

Here I be comfortably established,

With a long, sweet May Day melancholy,

Alone and innocent; then you needs come

And bring a face whereat I can but weep,

And a sound like a man counting money.

PIETRO PAOLO.

I do admit, madonna, that you mar
The tender glory of this sunlit spot.

FIAMETTA.

Ah, glory doubly marred! Ah, weary day!
[*Both look off stage expectantly.*]
Ah, to be safely home again, for there
I'd lock you out, signore, and have peace.
[*In looking for the expected arrivals they come face
to face, and each draws back.*]

PIETRO PAOLO.

[*Musingly.*]

I cannot fathom why you so pursue me!

FIAMETTA.

Insolent! Have you taken earth-roots here,
And sit and grow, and never will be gone?

PIETRO PAOLO.

In sooth, I'm wearied out. I do admit it.
You have me run to ground at last. . . .

FIAMETTA.

Then should Sidonia follow fast and seize
Her breathless quarry. Alas, poor Sidonia,
That she should chase so far and win so little!
Signore, you forget what day it is.
Caper a bit, and seek your lady out.

PIETRO PAOLO.

Ah, melody of May! the wine of Spring —
[*He looks at the chaplet, which is tingling in his fin-
gers.*]
I would I were out of this!

FIAMETTA.

I doubt not Sidonia hath a wood-full of lovers.
Crown yourself, Pietro, and dance in her train.
[*Pietro Paolo dons the chaplet, smiling ironically; the
chaplet music is instantly heard; he rubs his eyes,
and his face lightens; the Dryad of the May Day ap-*

pears before him, dancing, unseen by Fiametta, who is looking sulkily in the opposite direction. Pietro is fascinated by the music and the dance of the Dryad, and falls to dancing himself. The Dryad leads him about the stage and leaves him before Fiametta, still dancing.]

PIETRO PAOLO.

Look you, Fiametta, why do we waste our May Day?
What have we, and what has any one,
To quarrel withal? I'd hold it merrier
If we let more of sunlight in our souls,
Spoke free, and laughed, and made the most of youth.
I longed for sweet Sidonia here anon,
Having her token, and would have you hence;
But now, in truth I would not have so fair,
So young, so blest a daughter of the gods
As you go from me.

FIAMETTA.

What sudden shift of heart speaks here?

PIETRO PAOLO.

No shift—but I have come to sense again.
Sweet lady, let there be no more of wrath,
No biting words; let all old hates and jests
Spin down the wind.

[He dances again.]

FIAMETTA.

Have done this dancing. Pietro, go away!

PIETRO PAOLO.

The only little spark that grieves my heart
Is that I dance alone. Fiametta,
I cannot stay to see you look so sour.
Let me have eyes that dance, and lips that kiss,
And hearts that sing; else I must run away.
You, Fiametta, in your lenten face
And long-drawn temper, make the world all grey.
I would not wait to irk you. Take you this.
Wear it a merry moment, smiling on me,
And I'll be gone, and run through Spring and Heaven
Till the vision fades. *[He gives her the chaplet.]*

FIAMETTA.

You swear you will be gone?

PIETRO PAOLO.

Truly I will —

Till you would have me back.

FIAMETTA.

That's fair enough.

[She dons the chaplet, rubs her eyes, and the Dryad appears with the music as before.]

How the gold sunlight glitters through the green!

[She also begins to dance.]

PIETRO PAOLO.

What have I found in gold to love and cling to,
While there was sunlight and a woman's hair!

FIAMETTA.

Pietro, you promised you would go away.

PIETRO PAOLO.

Aye, so I did — but now —

FIAMETTA.

No matter. I've forgotten why I willed
To have you go. Here's a wood of wonder;
I'd not be alone in it.

PIETRO PAOLO.

If you were minded to slay me, and so .
Blacken the good green carpet of the world,
My soul would still float here and palely thrill
To watch you. You could no more be alone,
Being so fair, than I could close mine eyes
And blot the vision out. Ah, Fiametta,
Flower of joy; what flame above your brows!
All conquered cities that have burned for love,
All sunset lights caught up in whirling seas,
All altar fires, and poppies in the grass,
And spinning gold that speaks the love of Jove,
Gleam round your head in dear divinity.

FIAMETTA.

Time for sweet words when the sweet night comes on.

PIETRO PAOLO.

Time now for words—winds that blow to the heart.
If I were silent, looking in your eyes,
I'd drown in them, seeking the cloudy line
Where the sky's blue is melted in the sea's.
Ah, voyage into virgin deeps, for me —
And lands beyond the dawn, and at the end
The golden fleece —

FIAMETTA.

I, too, am taken with a love of love.
[*She dances a few steps.*]

PIETRO PAOLO.

Dance, Fiametta. I love you bending so,
As I do love the reeds that greet the wind.

FIAMETTA.

Pietro Paolo, for that it is Spring,
I'm fain to dance with you. And yet —
[*The music stops suddenly, and she stands still.*]
I feel

Down in my heart's well, where the water of life
Bubbles like sand-springs after rain, some wave
That will not stir for you. I would not so
Have danced for you in winter, Pietro.

PIETRO PAOLO.

And I have always said, before to-day
That black hair pleased me best.

FIAMETTA.

I believe you shift with every change of weather.
[*Enter Sidonia.*]

PIETRO PAOLO.

Well, that's a merry heart, and a free heart,
To have in Spring.

SIDONIA.

A free heart, have you, and you boast of it?

PIETRO PAOLO.

Look, Fiametta, where Sidonia comes,
With morning step, yet twilight in her eyes,
With starry nights in coils upon her head,
Crowning her snowdrift beauty as with flowers,
And on her lips the life-blood of a rose.

SIDONIA.

Faithless and false, what is all this to thee?

PIETRO PAOLO.

Sidonia, I am no more false in this
Than the clear sun that shines on both alike.
Here is a day for love, and shall I waste
An hour in seeking, moaning what is lost?

SIDONIA.

Well, having found me, where's the day to be?

PIETRO PAOLO.

Ladies:

I am of bigger mould than once I was.
I cannot be without you both; black hair
I love, and red hair, too. Can we not all,
In common joy and mutual delight
Spend the day together?

FIAMETTA.

Nay, Pietro, come with me. I love you not,
But I've a merry mood and a light foot. Come,
We'll seek Riccardo out.

[She takes him by the arm, drawing him with her.]

SIDONIA.

[Seizing his other arm.]

Nay, come with me.

I'll not be seen with such a train of folly.

[Both ladies tug at Pietro, trying to take him off in opposite directions.]

FIAMETTA.

Come, Pietro. She dares not be seen with you.

[Fiametta finally pulls him away from Sidonia, and they go off, leaving her alone in the centre of the stage.]

SIDONIA.

There go a long year's love-lies. Let them go!
[*She flings off in the opposite direction. Enter Pan
and the Dryad of the May Day.*]

· DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

Your chaplet maddens them. Our spells are potent.

PAN.

Aye, if they all will put it on. Now mark:
They wear my chaplet, and they burn with love.
Tree-Heart, expound me this: why should this wreath
Not turn them all to me again, and let me rule,
As once I ruled, the natural heart of earth?
My Day will pass, but when it comes next year
Might I not find a welcome among men,
Somewhere a little temple decked with flowers,
Somewhere an altar garnished, and a priest
In unfamiliar, loving voice to chant?
Is this too much for one who was a god
To ask of Time?

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

The wreath will surely fade.

PAN.

True, true — the wreath will fade. So fadeth now
The last dim flicker of Olympian hope.
But still, if I can no more be a god,
No longer smell the smoke of sacrifice,
No longer see my votaries at the shrine
In saffron robes of solemn festival,
At least I am not wholly dispossessed;
My magic holds; now like a harlequin
Doth poor old Pan limp up and down the fair
And juggle destinies for clowns who love.
What would I more?

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

It seems to me good sport.

PAN.

And so it is. . . . But I remember well,
Too well, Tree-Heart, the dawning of the world.

DRYAD OF THE MAY DAY.

Can Pan be sad on May Day?

PAN.

Up! To work!

Let me shake off these haunting memories
That flock about me like the birds of night.

[He picks up the key, which Pietro Paolo has left on the ground, and as he speaks his incantation over it, the musical motive of the key is heard for the first time.]

This key the tyrant made his token. See,
I make it mine. By Hermes! glittering key,—
I make thee mine. I touch thee, thrice. I breathe
In secret whisper my most secret name.

And now let him soe'er who holds thee dream
Of power to pass ambition's highest bound;
Twist the clear common faculty of sight
Awry; give him vain visions, unrealities;
And fill him with seditions and revolts.
Now, Woodling, watch mine ancient wisdom work
Upon their mortal folly. Love am I
For this day's traffic — love that weaves and crosses.

[Pan and the Dryad go out. Ruffo and Beffana come in, dancing, followed by Fiametta. They dance a figure to the beat of the verses.]

BEFFANA.

Airily dancing in the day,
Daintily glancing through the May,

RUFFO.

We are the folk who herd the goats,
And like the goats are skipping.

FIAMETTA.

I keep no goats, but I wish I did,
For my feet are as free as the feet of a kid;
I'm weary of buskins and frocks and coats —
My every-day life it is slipping.

BEFFANA.

Lady or goatherd,

RUFFO.

Mistress or man,

BEFFANA.

We're worshipping Love wherever we can,

RUFFO.

Dancing his dances, chanting his notes,

FIAMETTA.

As the minutes go merrily tripping.

[Beffana sinks down on one of the benches.]

BEFFANA.

My life! But dancing all night would be like eating peaches. Fifteen seasons, and all of 'em Spring—that's my age. You have n't a kid younger, Ruffo.

RUFFO.

We're of the May Day, praises be! You, me, and the goats and kids.

FIAMETTA.

Why do we stop? The May is still as bright,
Bright is the sun, and rustling soft the wood.
Hear the bird-notes calling! Their very whistle
Sounds a rigadoun. Come, my feet would dance!
Why is the spirit of Love away?

RUFFO.

There's but one May, and that's to-day;

BEFFANA.

His breath is quick in each zephyr that floats,

FIAMETTA.

And the wine of his Spring we are sipping.

[Enter Riccardo, who stands amazed at the sight of Fiametta's companions.]

RICCARDO.

Here, cease! Fiametta, what is this? Where now
The maiden modesty that left your cheek
Ruddy as sunrise in the summer dawn?
Are you a goat, that you go prancing thus?

FIAMETTA.

Not I, Riccardo. These are goats, and I
A kid. Butt him, good Ruffo!

RICCARDO.

Cease. Away!

[Exeunt Ruffo and Beffana. Riccardo picks up the key; his face changes slowly, and he leaps up with a look of magical exaltation.]

I've found it, donna mia, — mine at last,
Wholly, entirely mine, and mine alone!
This key unlocks black Ugolino's life,
And when I turn it, all his tyrannies
Shall blow across the empty midnight — lost;
And I will bring this land to justice; I,
And I alone, shall rule, deliverer
Of all our people from his wolfish thrall.

FIAMETTA.

What think you you have come upon, Riccardo?

RICCARDO.

Hear me, for hope begins to burn in me.
What is 't?

FIAMETTA.

A key — an ordinary key.

RICCARDO.

The key to him who holds beneath his heel
This principality; key to a door
Where death shall enter soon. Let silence fall
Around me as a cloak to hide the deed
I now must carry in my heart's hot core
Until I strike. Silence — and secret steel!

FIAMETTA.

These doleful plottings ill become this wood.
If you have heels for dancing — I stay here.

RICCARDO.

[*Seats himself, resolutely.*]
Heels for dancing — when I've this to do: —
To kill a tyrant ere I dance again.

FIAMETTA.

This talk of slaying goes against my mood.
Poet thou art, and no conspirator —
Bays for thy brow, and music for thy breath.

[*She crowns him with the chaplet. The Dryad enters as before, and Riccardo rubs his eyes to find himself dancing after her. He speaks or sings.*]

RICCARDO.

Young is the day,
Now it is May,
Young, too, are we!
The sky, the year,
And youth are here —
So runs our glee!
No song is sung
Save when we're young:
The May, the sky,
The lass, and I!

[*Exit the Dryad.*]

FIAMETTA.

I knew you poet — now I've had my song.

RICCARDO.

[*Now doubly bewitched.*]
Who spoke of me as poet? I am prince,
And men kneel to me; when I cough, they wince.
Nay, I am king, and when I chance to sneeze,
Ladies and lordlings fall upon their knees.
Indeed, I'm more than that — I'm emperour
And hearty men fall dead the nights I snore.

[*Enter Pietro Paolo in haste.*]

PIETRO PAOLO.

I have nigh lost myself three times or more
While I've been hunting for Sidonia —

[*Perceives the others.*]

Ah, here you are. . . .

Riccardo, and sweet Fiametta, you!

I've done my duty searching — now let's dance.

[*They dance a measure to the beat of the lines, which they speak alternately.*]

The sweetest of May

Is with us to-day,

And happy our feet in the measure!

We are children of Love,

With his white clouds above

And his shadowy wish for our pleasure!

So we trip it and sing

To Love and the Spring,

And close in our bosoms their treasure!

[*The dance ends.*]

FIAMETTA.

No king with countless treasures is more merry.

RICCARDO.

Nay, I *am* king. This key you both do know,

Shall give me entrance to my room of state,

And who shall dare reject my sovranty?

[*He gives the key to Fiametta, who is at once made a partner in his magical sedition.*]

To you, my Fiametta, I entrust

My crown.

FIAMETTA.

I yearn to offer homage here,

And be the first to kneel before your throne.

King, in your court is there a place for me?

RICCARDO.

An equal throne, to sit at my right hand.

[*He seats her beside him, and she beckons to Pietro Paolo.*]

FIAMETTA.

And you shall hold our treasures, Pietro.

[She gives him the key. He instantly falls in with their plans, at which he had previously looked askance.]

PIETRO PAOLO.

Come, let us now conspire!

FIAMETTA.

And me, as well.

PIETRO PAOLO.

For Ugolino now the clock of doom
Midnight is tolling forth, and dead his hope!
Ended his day, and blackest night swoops down
Upon Capodimonte's realm. A fire
Is burning on its mountain tops that will
Not out until the wheezy world's aflame.

[Baldessare passes at the back, spying.]

RICCARDO.

Capodimonte is no more; its hills
Shall crush its valleys, and its towers crumble;
Against it will I lead vast multitudes,
Like Heaven's angels irresistible,
Till with its petty crown my brow upon
Another Alexander storm I hence,
Conquering and unconquered, till the world's
Bejewelled diadem of empery
Imperially I put by — with scorn.

[Sidonia enters and stands listening.]

FIAMETTA.

And I, clad in bright armour, like the sun
In noonday summer splendour, on a steed
Caparisoned with glory, in my right
A two-edged sword as fierce as any torch,
And in mine other hand the banner you
Have blest, shall head the swarm, trampling on kingdoms

O'er Europe to the North, o'er Asia
Unto Zipango, and to Africa.
The crowns of Cæsars shall be yours to play
At quoits with.

RICCARDO.

You shall be mine empress dear,
Upon my right hand sitting, empires round
Your proud sweet throat, and on each finger wear
A principality. The globe shall be
Your bauble.

PIETRO PAOLO.

And from me, most gracious lord,
Deign to accept such treasures as I have
Filched year by year and hoarded, till you hold
The habitable world as yours indeed,
And from the haughty summit of old earth
Your streaming ensign threatens Heaven itself.

RICCARDO.

And you shall be my grand vizier, and he,
This Ugolino, fetch your glittering arms
Ere you clasp battle as a bride, and when
You come again with victory on your brow
'T is he shall cleanse your greaves of clotted gore.

SIDONIA.

Oh, what is this too dreadful speech I hear!
Do you not know on every side they listen?
Shrewd Baldassare each least word of yours
Holds in his ear, to give it forth so soon
As he with Ugolino's met. What then
Will be your doom, your dreadful doom at last?
I've heard his fatal murmurings.
You all upon some too tall tree shall hang
Crimson and pendulous, like the month's cherries;
O Fiametta, Pietro Paolo, you,
And poor Riccardo, this your dreadful doom!

PIETRO PAOLO.

Why should I care?

RICCARDO.

And why should I?

FIAMETTA.

And I

Am sure no sweeter cherry will be found
Than I shall make.

PIETRO PAOLO.

It's that for Ugolino!

[*Snap his fingers.*]

RICCARDO.

His poor authority sets me asmile.

FIAMETTA.

Spring, the spider, has stung me in my soul,

And all my blood leaps in the tarentelle.

Come, let us dance a while — one moment, wait.

[*To Sidonia.*]

We cannot dance while your white face is long.

Come, laugh a little with us now.

[*She crowns Sidonia with the chaplet; the Dryad enters and dances. Sidonia leaps up, crying.*]

SIDONIA.

I am a child of the great god Pan!

[*All dance.*]

RICCARDO.

And I!

FIAMETTA.

And I!

PIETRO PAOLO.

And I!

SIDONIA.

I am his maid;

RICCARDO.

And I his man;

FIAMETTA.

I am his daughter!

PIETRO PAOLO.
And I his son!

OMNES.
We are his children, every one!

SIDONIA.
All in the month of May, say I!

RICCARDO.
And I!

FIAMETTA.
And I!

PIETRO PAOLO.
And I!

[The dance ends and they seat themselves; exit the Dryad.]

SIDONIA.
My heart between its monuments of snow
Holds you, Riccardo; yet, years leave me wise:
I fain must see in Pietro's glistening hoard
Of gems and gold the solace that may soothe
Importunate Time. Yet needs must I conspire
With you. I have at home a cimetar —
My sire won it — with which methinks I choose
To lop off Ugolino's crest, that he
May stand no taller than we common folk.

RICCARDO.
Sidonia, there's a halberd in my house
Would reach the frame of one upon a throne
As with a hook, and once it haled him down
To us — haled down in kindness, understand —
He'd be our height. My fluttering pulse responds
To yours. Though Fiametta long ago
Let my best love, like proffered violets,
Lie on her virgin breast; yet you I love
As well. And these the lines I wrote for you,
Dear mistress of the milding nights of May:

[Sings or speaks.]
Out of the dusk comes my lady fair,
Out of the dark as the mist rolls by,

Dusk on her brow, mist in her hair
Evening in her eye.

Tender her voice as the wood-bird's note,
Silvery sweet through the twilit rest;
Sunset her cheek, moon-rise her throat,
Fleurs-de-lys her breast.

Darkling and bright as the starlight clear,
Wistful with hope as the new moon's ray,
Cometh my own, cometh my dear
Lady of the May!

FIAMETTA.

The sweet strains breathe of roses 'neath the moon,
Riccardo mine, and to Sidonia
And her soft darkling splendour, they are as
The stars to night. Would that they were for me!

RICCARDO.

Fiametta's loveliness is of the sun.

[Kneeling before her.]

FIAMETTA.

Ah, your least singing word, O poet and lover
Of mine, brings me the beauty of all time
Sung by all poets; for their radiant songs
Are pearl and sard, jasper and chrysoprase,
By music delicately borne, as when
The fairy blossoms of the almond float
In amorous zephyrs lingeringly down.
Being a poet's inspiration's sweet!

[She sighs.]

Love songs and war songs: I've a poniard here.

[To Pietro.]

Canst not a poem, too, Pietro mine? If not
In carven words, why — deeds are better still.

PIETRO PAOLO.

I have a battle-mace, heavy and spiky,
My grandsir wielded in the holy wars
Against the Paynim; deeds I'll offer you.

While for you, Fiametta, cherish I
Tenderest affection, — still, my heart-strings yield
More wistful melody when Sidonia comes.
If but the twilight dusk of her sweet hair,
Like lilies of the nights, may sweep across
My welcoming face, such tunefulness is mine
As hath the viol when some seraph plays.
[*Sidonia and Fiametta embrace, and Riccardo and
Pietro Paolo.*]

FIAMETTA.

And next Riccardo, you!

SIDONIA.

And you, my dear,
I hold next Pietro Paolo's honeyed self.

PIETRO PAOLO.

[*To Riccardo.*]
You with Sidonia share my very soul!

RICCARDO.

Fiametta alone surpasses you. . . .
Now let me grasp my halberd in my hand
And pull this Ugolino down.

FIAMETTA.

And I will shear his poll!

PIETRO PAOLO.

And I his pomp
Of bearing will make small with my great mace!

SIDONIA.

The while I pierce his boastful pride!

RICCARDO.

Then come
And arm ourselves; upon the castle move:
[*Enter Ugolino, silently, at the back.*]
'T is a good deed, and better kindly done;
So, one embrace, sweet, lasting — and to work!
We shall have Ugolino's thanks anon.
[*They embrace, with mutuality.*]

Ah, sacred moment in a blessed day!
Why spells it not a long eternity?

PIETRO PAOLO AND SIDONIA.

Why not?

RICCARDO AND FIAMETTA.

Why not?

UGOLINO.

[*Sardonically, as he comes down.*]

Why not? What is 't I see?

Two wondrous pairs of pirates have I here,
Cooing full featly in the vernal wood.
My friends, my loving friends, what bliss
Must this be that you find in ladies' eyes,
In sleek and ready-lying courtier's tongues!
Ladies, it gives me joy to see your love.
For me there is no stirring of the blood,
No heart at gaze nor lure of Spring. But you
Do mock me in my loveless lonely state.
So be it. These Arcadian joys of yours
May serve you well when I have cast you off.

PIETRO PAOLO.

Have we not served you well, my lord and prince?

UGOLINO.

So well that I 'll be served by you no more.
I do suspect you all.

[*They laugh.*]

You dare to laugh!

My premonition lacks some open flaw,
A single crime to touch and say: For this
I banish you. I have endured you long.

[*Enter Baldassare.*]

BALDASSARE.

Oh, sire, the faithful watch you bade me keep
Upon these four is ended here. They all
Are guilty of high treason 'gainst your life,
And of conspiracy against your throne;
Now all their heads stand forfeit to the State.

You bade me watch them. I have heard such words
As might be seen to fall like eager blades
Upon their speaking throats.

UGOLINO.

O faithful one,
Thou darkling friend of melancholy kings,
Now do I see them as they are. The truth
Doth burn within me, and I know their hearts.

[*To the four.*]

Now shall you bare your sacrificial throats
Against the headsman's edge. For you must die,
Thrice proven traitors to my princely self,
And to Capodimonte utterly
Faithless. My vision now grows clear.
Quick, get you gone upon the castle road;
Tarry not now, for in the deepest deep
The dungeons under, shall you rot, until
The day is come wherein your heads shall off!

RICCARDO.

My head is small, your Grace, and little holds
To make me sigh for losing it, but I
Shall truly feel aggrieved must I go in
And lose the May Day sun within the house.

FIAMETTA.

Far rather lose my head, O sire, than lose
The golden locks that cover it. But — oh!
How can you think of housing us this day
With such a sun and such a sky above?

PIETRO PAOLO.

My locks and head alike may go from me
And I should laugh—if laughter were
When the head's missing. But lock me up
While the birds sing! I'll none of it—not I.

SIDONIA.

I think we have not heard your Grace aright;
You can not mean that we must within walls
Spend any part of May Day? Let it go
Until to-morrow. Then take off our heads.

UGOLINO.

Now, Baldassare, draw your gloomy blade.

[*To the four.*]

Now, since you value not these empty heads
And set such store by out-of-doors, he shall
Behead you all, and all of you remain
Dissevered under the sun and sky for ever.
How like you that? You care not? Mad, — all mad!

PIETRO PAOLO.

I see it now. Your Grace would emulate
Some mighty tyrant of an ancient tale
And tread in blood a festal path to joy.
Be Nero, sire, and let me offer thee
A chaplet for thine entrance to the games;
Be Nero, and go garlanded with death.
[*He takes the chaplet from Sidonia's head, and offers
it to Ugolino. The Prince hesitates a moment, then
waves it away.*]

UGOLINO.

You make too great a festival, my friends,
Of this your sudden and untimely end.

[*Sidonia rises and takes the chaplet from Pietro
Paolo.*]

SIDONIA.

Now by great Pan, who, as the legends say
Doth rule in Italy till May Day night,
You show us but a pallid courtesy.
Since we are dead already, most dread lord,
Shall we not for the moment have our play?
You were not happy in our living love,
And now shall we not find you gay with flowers
When you have rid yourself of us?
[*She offers the chaplet, which Ugolino takes in his
hands.*]

UGOLINO.

It seems that I have cause to smile in this;
Your treasons and your mockeries are done;
At last you give me joy. My mockery

Is this, to deck myself with coronals
Now that I rid myself of you, since all
Of you are dead already.

[He crowns himself with the chaplet. The Dryad appears, dancing before him; his face relaxes; he smiles; his body sways, and he begins to dance.]

Pan's is the prettiest play that's played!

[As he speaks, the other four leap up and join in the dance.]

FIAMETTA AND RICCARDO.

Say I!

SIDONIA AND PIETRO PAOLO.

Say I!

UGOLINO.

And I!

PIETRO PAOLO.

I am his man!

FIAMETTA.

And I his maid.

SIDONIA.

And I his lass.

RICCARDO.

And I his lad.

OMNES.

The loveliest children that ever he had!

UGOLINO.

All in the month of May, say I.

SIDONIA AND PIETRO PAOLO.

And I.

FIAMETTA AND RICCARDO.

And I.

UGOLINO.

And I.

[The Dryad dances off, bringing Ugolino face to face with Baldassare, who stands expectant, with drawn sword. The glow of sunset comes over the scene.]

BALDASSARE.

When shall my work begin, your Grace?

UGOLINO.

[*Mildly.*]

Why now disturb conviviality,
While vernal effervescence stirs the blood,
And we are fed on honey of the May?
These are my friends, affectionately disposed
To me, as I to them, chiefly in this:
That they admit me to their company
In all good fellowship and joy, despite
My recent yearnings for their hearts' best blood.

BALDASSARE.

And all my lonely spying and dark proofs, —
Are these to waste, and justice be no more?
My thirsty blade has earned this treasonous blood,
And shall it thirst for ever? Let me work.
O grant me this, dear lord.

UGOLINO.

Lord me no lords!

We're equal here in nature, human all,
With lot and share in all the world's best good.
Crown me this thirsty-bladed man, and let
The glancing lights of May dance round his head.
He has been faithful; let him not be sad.

BALDASSARE.

[*Kneeling.*]

I write this mockery on a vengeful heart.

[*Fiametta takes the chaplet from Ugolino and stands over the kneeling headsman. Enter Ruffo and Bef-fana, who stand watching.*]

FIAMETTA.

Yours be it to see life as one great whole,
The rock, the tree, the river, and the field,
The cloud, the beast, and their blood-brother, man,
Drenched by one dew and rain, warmed by one sun

And sky, blown by one wind, wafting them on
One fate between the two eternities.

[*She crowns him with the chaplet. Both the Dryads enter, dancing before him, and he dances slowly and grotesquely after them, chanting.*]

BALDASSARE.

I sang the scaffold made,
The muffled drum,
The shivering culprit come,
The falling blade;
The great bell's weary toll,
The passing soul;
But now the firstling bud
Doth sting my blood
With finer throbbing than the blade
Hath ever made;
And love within my breast
Hath heartier zest
And deeper woundings than the block may meet —
Love and the Spring are sweet.

[*The others fall in behind Baldassare as he chants, swinging around the stage in a processional, Baldassare at the close of his speech falling in with the Dryad of the May Day, Ugolino with the Dryad of the May Night, and the others in couples.*]

RICCARDO AND FIAMETTA.

Love and the Spring are two of the three—

PIETRO PAOLO AND SIDONIA.

Say I,

RUFFO AND BEFFANA.

And I,

UGOLINO.

And I.

Station is folly!

PIETRO PAOLO.

Wealth, vanity;

RUFFO AND BEFFANA.

Labour is sorrow!

OMNES.

Pan is our king!

Sing hey for Pan and Love and Spring,
All in the month of May, sing hey,
Say I, and I, and I.

[As they dance around the stage, the procession is lessened as couple by couple drops off, and disappears among the trees. As the last couple makes its exit, Pan is disclosed laughing. The lights dim to night as he speaks the epilogue.]

PAN.

Gone is the day with all its mirth and madness;
Come is the night, and promise of fulfilment;
How have they fought, these men and e'en the im-
mortals,

'Gainst the soft promptings of their master, Love!

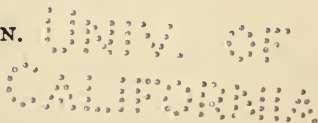
What is the worth of princes and their power,
What can avail much wealth and secret hoarding,
What mean the blade and bravery of the warrior,
Weighed 'gainst the whisper of their master, Love?

Even the gay plot wherewith is sought the woman,
Even the sweet grace whereby the maid escapeth,
Even the dear thought of wistfulness and beauty,
What all their meaning, uninspired by Love?

This is the key whereto all doors stand open,
This the one spring wherefrom pure water welleteth,
This the fine warp through which man's joy is woven,
This earth's one heaven, gently ruled by Love.

Gone is the day, with all its woe and warring;
Come is the night and promise of the morrow;
Earth rests and smiles beneath Love's blest dominion —
Love, friend and servant of the great god Pan.

CURTAIN.



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